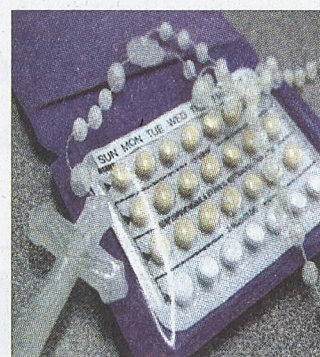




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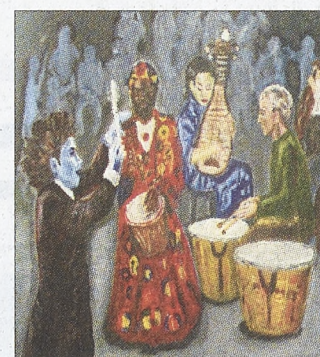
VALLEY STAR

the independent student newspaper



Do you agree with Arizona's proposed bill on birth control?

SEE OPINION PAGE 3



The ASU and art club team up to bring the arts festival to Valley.

SEE VALLEY LIFE PAGE 4



The Valley Star profiles Monarch baseball player Travis Cassidy.

SEE SPORTS PAGE 6

lavalleystar.com

April 18, 2012

Volume 76 Issue 5



R.I.P. - Students carry a coffin full of petitions to Gov. Jerry Brown appealing to him to increase funding for community colleges March 28 in Monarch Square, where students and professors spoke to the crowd of supporters.

MANY STUDENTS AFFECTED BY BUDGET CUTS LOOK FOR ALTERNATIVES, SOME RESORT TO PROTESTS

STUDENTS PROTEST AT SANTA MONICA COLLEGE

Misinformation over proposed fee increases leads to a student protest and pepper spray at SMC.

KEVIN JERSEY
STAFF WRITER

A student protest at Santa Monica College recently made national news when 30 students were pepper sprayed during a confrontation with police outside a meeting of the school's board of trustees. But college administrators and some students claim the protest was based on false information.

The heart of the protest was the school's proposed "Advance Your Dreams" program, which would have provided additional classes during the summer and winter sessions in an attempt to offset the decrease in class offerings caused by statewide budget cuts. Because fewer classes are available, many students are not able to enroll in the classes they need.

These additional classes, however, would have come with a catch. Since state funding would not cover the cost of the classes, it would be provided through a non-

profit corporation set up by the school—leading to the program being also known as "Corporate Education." This would result in higher fees for students. While fees for the 700 regularly scheduled summer classes would remain at the regular rate of \$46 per unit, the additional 50 classes created by the proposed program would cost \$180 per unit. The protest came in response to rumors that the increased fees would apply to all classes.

Valley College faces similar financial issues, but has no plans to implement a tiered tuition system.

"At this point, it's not going to be a topic of discussion for us," said Valley President Sue Carleo. "We're just going to continue to do the best we can with what we've got."

The Corsair, Santa Monica's student newspaper, reports that President Dr. Chui Tsang said the program intended to give students the option to take additional classes so they can transfer to four-year universities, as well as minimize any delays in education due to state budget cuts.

Despite the cuts, Carleo doesn't foresee similar protests at Valley. "I think the students are very astute today," she said. "They understand what's going on in Sacramento."

Josh Miller, the president of Valley's Academic Senate, sees the benefits of a

[See SANTA MONICA Page 2]

BUDGET CUTS PUT CSUN APPLICANTS IN LIMBO

Students discover new barriers in transferring with the reservation of spring classes for those currently enrolled.

EDYTHE SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Valley College students considering transferring to CSUN in the near future—including those who applied for the spring 2012 semester—may be surprised to discover the university will be accepting new applicants on a limited basis for fall 2012 and will not enroll new students this spring.

Darnell Edwards, a CSUN Outreach coordinator, attended a recruitment event for students last week sponsored by Valley's Career/Transfer Center. According to Edwards, CSUN will not accept applications for incoming freshmen or transfer students for the spring 2012 semester due to the lack of funding for ample courses.

"It sucks for students who are looking to transfer," said Edwards. "We decided to have spring courses available to students who are already taking classes.

With budget cuts, we just don't have enough classes for them; so this was a solution to be fair and help them finish on time."

Out of the hundreds of students from the LACCD who apply to CSUN, Edwards noted that representatives from the university only meet with an average of 15 students per event at various colleges—less than 1 percent of those who apply. He stated that since the Outreach program has not been as successful as previous years, many students are unaware of various tasks that need to be performed prior to applying—including deadlines for applications and financial aid.

"We've had to turn away a lot of students," said Edwards, "simply because they didn't know what the deadlines were."

Several students from Valley applied to CSUN for the spring semester and were unaware of the temporary freeze on applications, including Ellie Basaldua, a nursing major who applied last fall.

"I haven't gotten a letter or anything," said Basaldua. "I'm supposed to graduate and I have my nursing certification, but CSUN didn't tell me that spring was closed to transfers. It's so frustrating—it's not only affecting me but a lot of other students."

According to Edwards, the largest

[See BUDGET CUTS Page 2]

ON THE LOOKOUT...

PRICED OUT OF YOUR DEGREE

Students in the market for a four-year degree should throw their application net wider and include pricey, private universities.

ANNE CHRISTENSEN

As students struggle to get through college on time and on budget, they're now faced with an uncertain future in a CSU system encountering a double whammy of unprecedented tuition increases and frozen enrollment. Students planning on a four-year public university degree will have to adjust by also including private universities in the application process and bracing themselves for the very real possibility of taking on student loans.

Statewide budget cuts have forced community colleges and four-year universities to increase tuition, while California's 11-percent unemployment rate has increased enrollment in already maxed-out classrooms. Unless voters approve Gov. Jerry Brown's sales tax and upper-level income tax increase proposals in November, which would direct funds to education, CSU enrollment is taking an extended vacation.

As students come to terms with these changes, they must consider new ways to stay on academic track by including private universities in the application process. That may sound like financial suicide in today's economy, but the numbers are no longer in favor of earning a degree at a public university. Yearly tuition at CSU has tripled since 2003 and now averages more than \$7,000. Yet another increase—this time \$498—is planned for fall, according to the Sacramento Business Journal.

In comparison, tuition at USC is \$21,081 for one semester. Along with a higher sticker price, private universities like USC also require a higher GPA and letters of recommendation. A public university accepts students with a less-than-stellar GPA and no additional application work, something that may appeal to those who are already juggling jobs and family obligations

[See COLUMN Page 2]

ONLINE SLIDESHOW



Photos of the Week: L.A. Protest

These features and more can be found in full @ www.lavalleystar.com

MONARCH SWIM AND DIVE



State Championship

The Valley College swimming and diving team will compete in the State Championship. The event takes place April 26-28 at East Los Angeles College.

NEW BEGINNINGS BRING BIG NUMBERS AT ASU ELECTIONS

With an increase in student voters, ASU candidates put innovative strategies to use for campaigns.

EDYTHE SMITH
STAFF WRITER

Following last week's elections forum, Valley College students voted at Monarch Hall Monday and Tuesday for candidates wishing to fill all 15 positions of the Executive Council for

the Associated Student Union.

Several members who are currently on the board did not opt to run for this election because they are preparing to transfer—including the ASU President, Norvan Berkezyan.

"It's a good election," said Berkezyan. "The candidates are very passionate and hospitable towards each other. Each candidate organized their own campaign and enlisted volunteers—it's a way for them to demonstrate their leadership skills."

Ballots closed Tuesday at 7

p.m. Monarch Square was occupied by representatives and volunteers for presidential candidates and general awareness. Four voting booths were arranged next to a single ballot box, and refreshments were provided for those in attendance.

Tables were arranged with ballots and an ASU election-edition magazine. Situated at the tables were several hosts, including Ovanes Chobanian, the Election Committee president and commissioner of political affairs.

"Yesterday was a lot better

[See ELECTIONS Page 2]



CAST YOUR BALLOT - Students Keith Hernandez and Jin Ong campaigned for Associated Student Union presidential candidate Shawn Besharaty Tuesday in Monarch Square.

JD OROYE | VALLEY STAR

THE VALLEY STAR INFO & STAFF

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SANTA MONICA

Continued from page 1
tiered tuition program but does not support it.

"While it does allow certain students to get out quicker, it creates an advantage for those [who] have more money," said Miller. "And this defeats the idea of a community college, which is to provide inexpensive access to an education."

Students involved in the protest at Santa Monica echoed Miller's thoughts. Protesters were heard chanting, "No cuts. No fees. Education should be free." But, some students thought the protests were misguided.

"I think ['Corporate Education'] is a step in the wrong direction, definitely," said David Cooper, a psychology student at Santa Monica and one of the few dissenting voices among the protesters. "But, I also think to protest the school is counterproductive." Cooper suggested the budgetary problems were caused by the state government in Sacramento and not the school's administration.

Although the protest was partly based on misinformation, it was successful in getting the proposal voted down. Santa Monica still offers its regularly scheduled summer classes, but not the additional classes with increased fees. This is in contrast to Valley, which has been forced to cancel most of its planned summer session.

"We have a couple special things that go on in the summer that are year-round programs," said Carleo. "So those will be going on, but not the usual summer offering that students would be expecting."

ELECTIONS

Continued from page 1

than today," said Chobanian, "... because we had several rushes of students and a line to vote at times. Our goal is to beat last year's numbers."

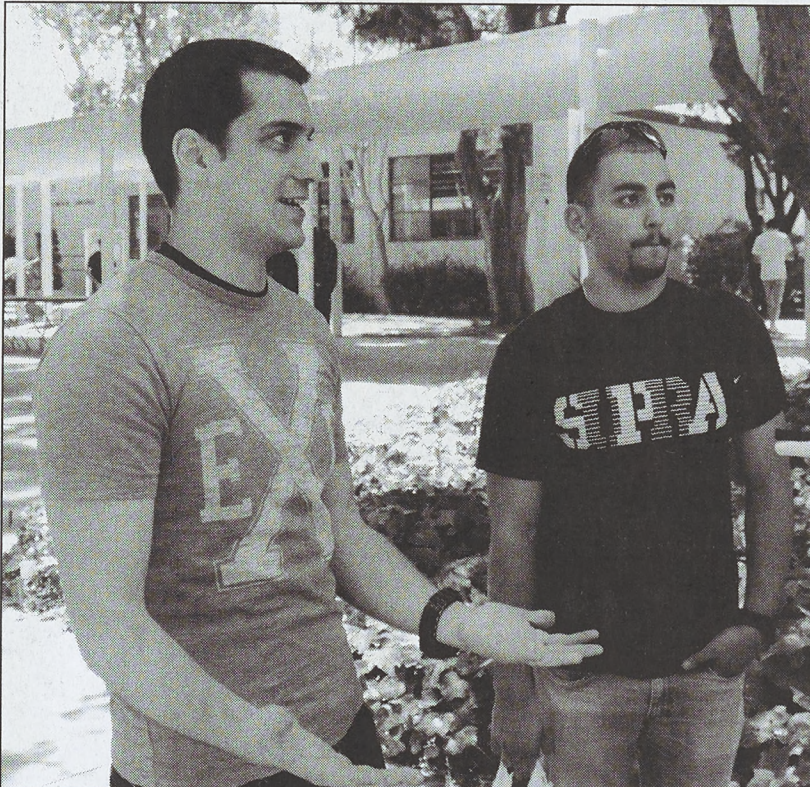
Chobanian stated the elections were running smoothly with approximately 300 voters on the first day. He noted that the only complaints mentioned were between candidates on minor campaign tactics but that the issues were resolved.

A majority of those involved in the electoral process were impressed with the amount of students who came out to vote. However, several students found the turnout less than satisfactory—including Maheesha Guruge, an engineering major.

"I'm an international student," said Guruge. "I pay \$200 per unit, and I am involved on campus. So, it really matters to me who becomes president. I announced the elections in class, but people gave a lot of excuses not to vote."

The ASU includes two branches: the Executive and Inter-Club Councils. Shawn Besharaty and Vahe Matevosayan, ASU's chief justice, ran for president. George Markarian, the current commissioner of athletics, and Lester B. Salvador, commissioner of campus/environmental affairs, ran for vice president. Jin Ong and Sam Key ran for commissioner of political affairs, and all other positions consisted of one candidate.

Results will be announced by the end of the week. Look for updates at www.lavalleystar.com



JD OROYE | VALLEY STAR

WEIGHING OPTIONS - Associated Student Union Vice President Edward Grigoryan and Commissioner of Political Affairs Ovanes Chobanian discussed on Tuesday the ASU election.

COLUMN

Continued from page 1

in addition to an academic career. But aiming for the more affordable, but non-accessible, public university degree may no longer be prudent.

Students entering the world of higher education, public or private, should know their financial options sooner rather than later. Those applying for financial aid will be offered assistance based on college fees and the ability to pay them. Students who do not qualify for grants—which are awarded to lower-income students and do not need to be paid back—may qualify for a part-time work-study program. All students can apply for scholarships awarded from either the university or private funds.

If students still come up short at the end of the month, there is the much-maligned student loan option. Paying for tuition with student loans is just like borrowing money for a new car: students must pay the loans plus interests, which accrue after graduation. The U.S. government is relentless in persecuting those who default on their payments.

But students should think twice before deciding to forgo the higher cost of a private university where it's possible to graduate in four years and start a career, versus spending years in the increasingly expensive public system in order to get a bargain-priced degree.

Granting access to affordable higher education is necessary if California intends to be a contender in the national economy. For now, California has plenty of sunshine. But unless money is put into the higher education system, that's about all it will have.

BUDGET CUTS

Continued from page 1

alternative for students looking for classes at the university level is extended learning courses. These classes are offered from the Tseng College at CSUN and would apply toward the students' bachelor's degrees. Extension courses can be taken online or in the classroom with students who are formally enrolled in the

class.

Financial aid cannot be applied to courses taken in the open-university program, and there is a limit of 24 units of credit. Registration for these courses begins on the first day of class and is processed on a space-available basis. Future CSUN applicants can inquire about these and other options during the CSUN Peer Mentor event sponsored at Valley Wednesday, April 18 in Administration 126.



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CUTTING TO THE BONE

ALL STUDENTS FEEL THE PAIN OF SLASHED BUDGETS

Budget cuts affect students at every level. And, there is no end in sight.

KEVIN JERSEY

Education budget cuts have become a national crisis. The immediate results of these cuts are seen in tuition increases and teacher lay-offs. However, the long-term effects are more troubling.

Lack of funding has handicapped educators at all levels, as early as pre-school. National Education Association research shows that students enrolled in pre-kindergarten programs like Head Start, which provides services to poverty-stricken children, perform better in school and are more likely to attend college.

Yet, the NEA reports that only 30 percent of eligible children participate in the program due to insufficient funding. Despite its demonstrated success, Head Start is on the chopping block again. Rep. Paul Ryan, R-Wis., chairman of the House Budget Committee, proposed cutting 200,000 spots from the program to provide additional funds for defense spending.

Decreases in education funding also impact college students. Tuition at all California state universities and community colleges has been raised, but the increased fees do not offset the shortages caused by funding cuts. Schools have had to find alternate money-saving measures. Valley College, for example, has had to cancel most of its summer classes. CSU recently eliminated grants for 20,000 graduate students, encouraging them to take out interest-heavy loans to pay their tuition.

Funding cuts also hinder student performance. An Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development study shows a direct link between the amount spent per student and test scores. Students nationwide were tested in math and reading comprehension in fourth grade and again in eighth grade. On average, state test scores increased by 1 percent for each \$1,000 spent per student.

Interestingly, there was little correlation between test scores and teacher salaries. Schools that hire additional teachers, enabling each student to receive more personal attention, scored better on tests than those that simply raised salaries for their existing teachers.

Yet, school districts are instead laying off teachers to save money. Many California teachers received "March 15" letters indicating that they would not be guaranteed a job for the next school year. In the Los Angeles Unified School District alone, more than 11,700 letters were issued. While some of these teachers will be fortunate enough to still be employed in the fall, many will not. Statewide, more than 32,000 teachers have been laid off since 2007, according to a report from California's legislative analyst's office.

Despite the obvious damage done by reducing education funding, the cuts continue. It is clear that there is a budget crisis, and it is just as clear that this is directly impacting students. As long as education is deprived of the funds it needs, students will suffer.

E-mail KEVIN JERSEY at k.jersey@lavalleystar.com. Send general comments to valleystar@lavalleystar.com.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS TAKE A BIG STEP BACKWARD IN AZ

Arizona's HB-2625 stands to wreak havoc on the lives of employees while saving employers a little religious guilt and a lot of secular money. And California could be next.

ROBERT DECKER
STAFF WRITER

Birth control and contraception, a very personal topic, is on the minds of many Arizona women as their Republican-led state legislature draws nearer to the passage of a new law allowing employers to deny insurance coverage for birth control when used for non-medical contraceptive reasons, giving employers a virtual key to the bedroom of their employees.

A recent amendment limited the bill's reach to religious-affiliated businesses—such as some churches, hospitals and schools—but that does little to ease its sting.

This is something of which Californians need to take heed. Arizona is one of California's closest

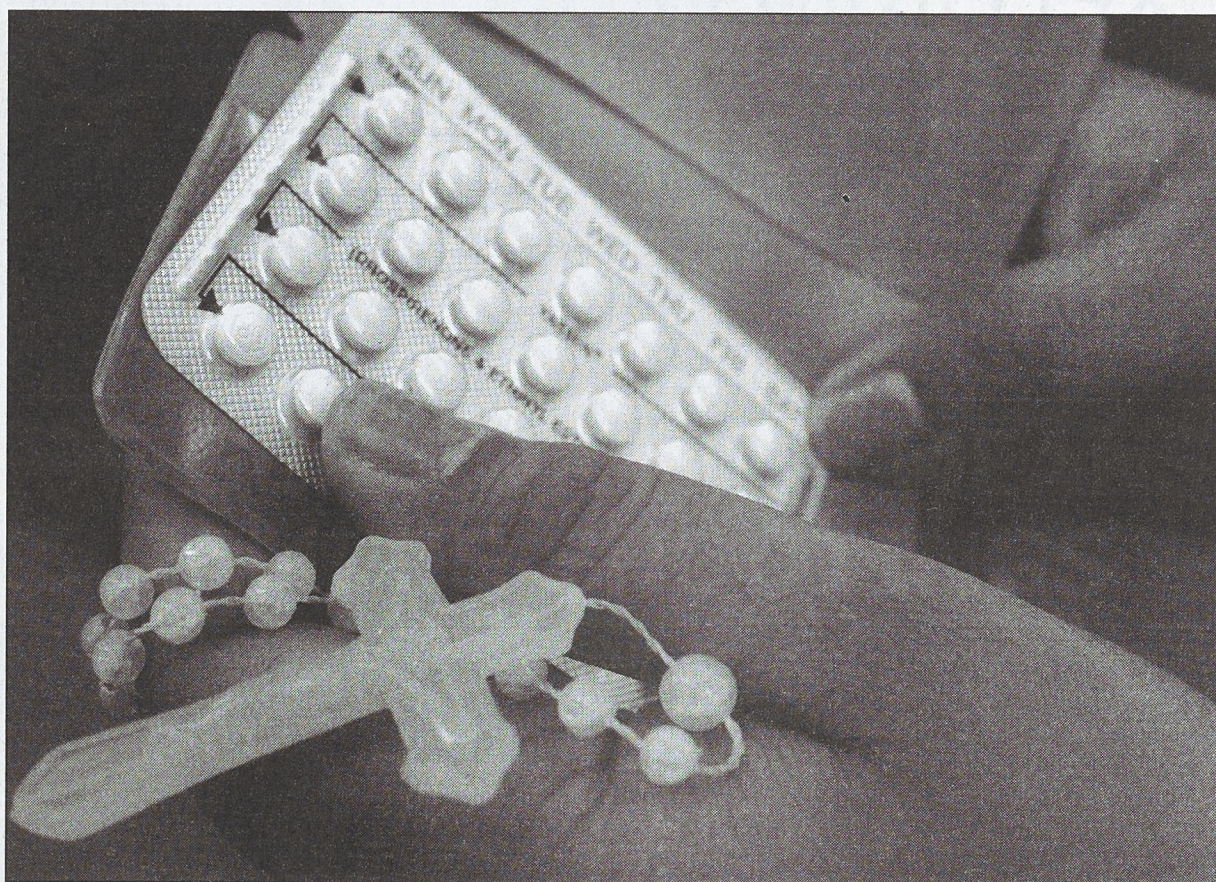
neighbors and one of the most liberal states in the nation regarding personal freedoms. If this can happen in Arizona, it can happen here.

The Arizona contraceptive mandate required all insurers that provide prescription-drug coverage to include birth control in their list of covered medications. HB-2625 would change that. The law, introduced by Republican state Rep. Debbie Lasko, allows Arizona religious-affiliated employers to opt out of the contraceptive mandate.

This law sets a terrifying precedent for state-condoned employer discrimination and forces employees into a position where they have to disclose very personal information on a professional level.

Any belief that such a wide-open law—based solely on individual religious and moral preferences—will not end in discrimination, wrongful termination and a litany of lawsuits is asinine. And the sad fact is that it is not a question of if the law passes: it is a question of when.

The law would be a giant step backward for a state that prides itself on its independent nature, cowboy roots and protection of personal free-



SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND CONTRACEPTION - A proposed bill in Arizona would entangle religion and healthcare, allowing employers at religious-affiliated businesses to deny contraception coverage to female employees using it for birth control purposes.

doms. This is a state where it is legal to walk down the road with two six-shooters and a loaded shotgun as long as they are not concealed.

"I personally don't have a moral objection to contraceptives," said Lasko. "But I respect the people that do."

It seems that Lasko has taken the route of covering her ugly actions with soft words. But the fact is that

this law is not going to affect Debbie Lasko, ever. The state of Arizona is not going to take away any of her medicine based on her beliefs. It is going to wreak havoc on the lives of middle- and lower middle-class young women who are already struggling to get by. This law really only stands to harm working-class families and young women who already have an uphill battle in today's bat-

tered economy.

"Elected officials are playing politics with women's health," said Anjali Abraham, the American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona Public Policy director. "These efforts to take away existing protections for women's basic health services will ultimately hurt Arizona women and, by extension, Arizona families."

VALLEY VIEW | DO YOU THINK EMPLOYERS SHOULD HAVE THE LEGAL RIGHT TO INQUIRE ABOUT EMPLOYEES' RELIGIOUS BELIEFS?



"I don't think it's any of their business ... They should abide by the separation of church and state."

-ALVA CASTILLO,
SOCIOLOGY



"No. Religion shouldn't define a person. A person should be judged by how they incorporate their knowledge into the work field."

-HANNAH SHUSTER,
ACCOUNTING



"I don't think they should ask the question. It shouldn't matter. What religion you are does not make a difference."

-JEFF GARCIA,
BUSINESS



"Absolutely not. Religion is so private, so personal. That's very un-American ... I think that will open another can of worms."

-ASHLEY ANTHONY,
ANTHROPOLOGY/ENGLISH



"No, but they might feel they have the right to know. If I [were] the owner of a company, I [would] want to know."

-CRISTINA GARCIA,
RESPIRATORY THERAPY

COMPILED BY JD OROYE | VALLEY STAR

CONTINUED LACK OF GUN CONTROL MEANS NO END TO TRAGIC CAMPUS SHOOTINGS

Recent university shootings are just the latest proof that gun control laws are needed to end senseless killings.

KEVIN JERSEY
STAFF WRITER

Early this month, seven people were killed at Oikos University in Oakland, Calif. A former nursing student, upset that he had been expelled, entered a classroom, told the students to line up against the wall and opened fire. Each of the seven deaths from that day is tragic. But just as tragic is the fact that thousands of Americans are killed each year by guns and nothing

is being done about it. This must change.

The Second Amendment of the Constitution guarantees the right to bear arms, and Americans have taken full advantage of this right. There are currently around 270 million guns in America, nearly one for every person in this country. That is despite the fact that guns are created for only one purpose: to kill.

Guns have killed an average of more than 32,000 people per year over the past three decades, according to a report from the Firearm & Injury Center at the University of Pennsylvania. That's almost a million lives that could have been saved if guns weren't so easily available.

Advocates argue that guns are

necessary for self-defense and that they have a right to protect themselves and their property. Yet, a study from the American Journal of Public Health shows areas with higher rates of gun ownership have significantly higher rates of gun fatalities. Additionally, people carrying guns are no less likely to be injured during a crime than unarmed people. In fact, guns increase crime rates rather than bring them down. For every person killed by a gun, more than 35 others are victims of a crime that involved a gun, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

People are killed at work, at home and, like those at Oikos University, even at school. These

are places that are supposed to be sanctuaries of safety, free from danger; but, as long as people continue to carry guns, no place is ever completely safe. Since the infamous 1999 Columbine massacre, there have been more than 170 deaths in school shootings—including 32 at Virginia Tech in 2007. And, as tragic proof that not enough is being done to eradicate campus gun violence, two more people were killed at Virginia Tech in 2011.

Despite all this, gun advocates adamantly oppose any kind of gun regulation. The National Rifle Association pushes laws like Florida's controversial "Stand Your Ground" law, which famously led to the killing of Trayvon Martin in

February. Politicians are quick to lend their support, with presidential candidate Mitt Romney speaking at the NRA's annual convention last Friday to assure gun owners that he's on their side. They continue to believe the solution to gun violence is to have more guns when, in fact, the opposite is true. Quite simply, if there are guns around, they are going to be used to kill people.

This is a violent country, but it doesn't have to be. Fewer people should have guns, and there should be fewer guns available. Laws making it easier for people to obtain guns are the cause and not the solution to the problem of gun violence. And until people realize this, no one will be truly safe.

BAD MEDICINE: ADDICTION HITS CLOSE TO HOME

The face of drug addiction is changing.

ROBERT DECKER
STAFF WRITER

With the deaths of Heath Ledger, Michael Jackson and, most recently, Whitney Houston all being attributed to the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs, it is tempting to chalk up their addictions to simple rock-star decadence. But the L.A. Times released reports showing that deaths from drug overdose now outnumber deaths from traffic accidents in the United States, and these rock-star problems are wreaking havoc on the lives of everyday people.

The disgusting fact is that most of these deaths are preventable because the bulk of these drugs are coming

not from drug cartels, but from the prescription pads of unethical pain management doctors. Whether you are talking about celebrities or your black-sheep-of-the-family cousin who no one trusts, the effects of drug addiction run painfully deep and must be stopped. It's not just an addict or some junkie who dies that day: it's someone's son or daughter and the hopes and dreams of a family.

In September, the L.A. Times published a report based on preliminary data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stating that in 2009, drug overdose caused at least 37,485 deaths—far outnumbering deaths from auto accidents that year. The surge in these drug-related deaths is largely due to the rise in popularity of prescription pain and anxiety drugs that are

plentiful, cheap and highly addictive. And in many cases, these drugs are legal with a prescription, a prescription that—according to the numbers—isn't very hard to come by.

It has been well documented by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency that non-medical prescription drug use is one of the fastest-growing categories of recreational drug use among high-school and college students in the United States today.

Students are using prescription drugs to get high, and not only for recreation. They rely on stimulants to help cram for exams, benzodiazepines to combat anxiety and depression, and performance-enhancing drugs to aid in sports. The list just doesn't seem to stop.

What has been less well documented is the fact that these drugs

are more likely to come from the local drugstore than the street corner, thanks to a network of cash-only pain clinics run by less-than-honest physicians willing to look the other way to keep their appointment books full.

Dr. Greg—an alias chosen to protect privacy due to the sensitive nature of his profession—is an addiction specialist and a physician in a local methadone clinic. What has been surprising to the good doctor lately is the amount of serious opiate addiction and withdrawal he has been witnessing not from heroin users, but from people abusing prescription pain medication.

Dr. Greg reports an influx of relatively young patients with OxyContin and morphine addictions, and he insists the effects are just as bad as—if not worse than—street

drugs such as heroin.

"Medication addicts get their drugs from pharmacies, which have a better track record of stability than heroin dealers," said Dr. Greg. "The problem is that addicts have an unwarranted faith in the safety of medication, especially if it is prescribed to them, and they become addicted."

It is time to put an end to unscrupulous doctors' practices and stop these senseless deaths.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

Letters to the editor can be sent to:

editorinchief@lavalleystar.com or submitted online at www.lavalleystar.com. Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.

LAVC Events

APRIL

Wednesday, 18

"Obscured Lines: Contemporary Drawing in Los Angeles" Art Exhibition
Sponsored by the LAVC Art Gallery
11 a.m. - 2 p.m., 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
LAVC Art Gallery
(818) 778-5536

Free Concert Wednesdays
1 p.m.
Sponsored by the LAVC Music Department
Performance by the LAVC Guitar Faculty
Music 106
Concert Hotline: (818) 778-5633

Thursday, 19

"Obscured Lines: Contemporary Drawing in Los Angeles" Art Exhibition
Sponsored by the LAVC Art Gallery
11 a.m. - 2 p.m., 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
LAVC Art Gallery
(818) 778-5536

Student Success Jamboree
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Sponsored by the LAVC Student Success Committee
Emergency Services Training 113
(818) 947-2811

Friday, 20

Student Success Jamboree
1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Sponsored by the LAVC Student Success Committee
Emergency Services Training 113
(818) 947-2811

Saturday, 21

IDEAS Workshop
9:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.
Sponsored by the LAVC IDEAS program
Campus Center 4, 6, 8, 10, 104 and 208
(818) 778-5569

! THINK TRANSFER

APRIL

Wednesday, 18

CSUN Mentor
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Job Fair in Monarch Square
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Undecided Major/Career Workshop
1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Thursday, 19

Internship Fair at Monarch Square
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Service Learning Fair at Monarch Square
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Friday, 20

Cal State Dominguez Hills and Cal State Long Beach Bus Trip
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Monday, 23

CSUN Representative
12 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Undecided Major/Career Workshop
5 p.m. - 6 p.m.

All activities are held in the Career/Transfer Center (Administration 126) unless otherwise indicated.

Hours for the Career/Transfer Center are Monday - Thursday from 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.

For appointments and further information, call (818) 947-2646.

For more information, also visit www.lavc.edu/transfer.

EXPLORING LOS ANGELES ON A STUDENT BUDGET

In these hard financial times, a little creativity can go a long way in exploring the city for a great price, no car required.

ROBERT DECKER
STAFF WRITER

With many college students suffering from the rising costs of tuition, textbooks and fuel, it is easy to see why some are opting to stay home rather than pay for increasingly expensive meals and entertainment. However, there are other affordable alternatives.

This is Los Angeles, a sprawling urban metropolis filled with beautiful parks and cinematic history. And with a little effort, creativity and forethought, one can have an enjoyable afternoon for around \$50.

The destination is Los Feliz. Starting from Valley College, pick up two \$5 Metro day passes and take the Orange Line to the North Hollywood Station. Transfer to the Red Line toward Union Station, which is a 10-minute ride to the Vermont/Sunset Station. A five-minute walk north on Vermont Avenue leads into the heart of Los Feliz.

There are many choices for indoor and outdoor dining. Dine on the patio at Fred 62 and enjoy burgers and sodas for around \$30, or grab some coffee and pie for about \$20 at House of Pies, where Quentin Tarantino wrote the movie "Reservoir Dogs."

To avoid crowds and long waits, take a picnic to Griffith Park. It is a cheaper option; and with the money saved, there are plenty of local bars to visit—such

as Dresden, The Big Foot Lodge or The Griffin.

After venturing through the city, head north on Vermont Avenue two blocks to Los Feliz Boulevard. Take the Metro east on Los Feliz Boulevard for five minutes, and the bus will reach the east entrance of Griffith Park—right near the pony farm, a popular feature of the park.

Once on park grounds, the entrance to the Beacon Hill trail is to the left of the parking lot. It quickly ascends into nature, leaving the city out of view and creating an intimate atmosphere.

The mild incline of the trail

“This is Los Angeles, a sprawling urban metropolis filled with beautiful parks and cinematic history. And with a little effort and creativity ... one can have an enjoyable afternoon for around \$50.”

allows visitors to travel at their own pace. At the halfway point, the trail crests the tree line, revealing the view of downtown and East Los Angeles.

At the peak lies the Beacon point lookout. Sweeping vistas of Los Angeles and Pasadena combine for a breathtaking view. Even at a relaxed pace, the peak of the trail can be reached in approximately an hour.

After finishing the moderately short hike, stop back in Los Feliz for drinks. With this nighttime entertainment included, the total for the day is around \$50, which is not bad for a day of entertainment.



LIFE IMITATING ART - Women's basketball guard Rachele Estrella created art of her own with fellow guard Vanessa Aguilera and a friend.

ART LOVERS GAIN BENEFITS FROM FESTIVAL'S RELOCATION

The fine arts festival was relocated to Monarch Hall with club day and financial aid awareness day.

ROMEO GONZALEZ
STAFF WRITER

Art admirers throughout Valley College were treated to the second annual arts festival last Wednesday. The event took place in Monarch Hall, accompanying

club day and financial aid awareness day after it was relocated due to rain.

Complimentary food and refreshments were offered to everyone who attended, as well as a cultural experience and financial advice.

The festival included an art contest themed "Cultural Identity" and was open to all students who submitted an art piece. 2-D and 3-D pieces—including photography, paintings, sketches, and sculptures—portrayed the values and beliefs of life.

"The purpose of the festival is to bring art back to the students," said Anne Tufenkjian, the president of the arts club. "We had [more than] 25 people enter their pieces. It has been quite successful."

Since the theme of the afternoon was "art," all clubs participating in club day had different art activities available to the audience.

One form of art was a performance by the dance club, where three dancers painted their entire bodies white, dressed in white robes, and held a red rose in hand—giving viewers the illusion they were statues. The dancers made their way to the center of the room and gave a five-minute performance where they moved slowly, creating different poses.

The ECO Advocates club incorporated ecology in its work, using recycled bottles to make paintings. Participants were

invited to visit the station and use the bottles as stamps to create paintings of flowers and cherry blossom trees.

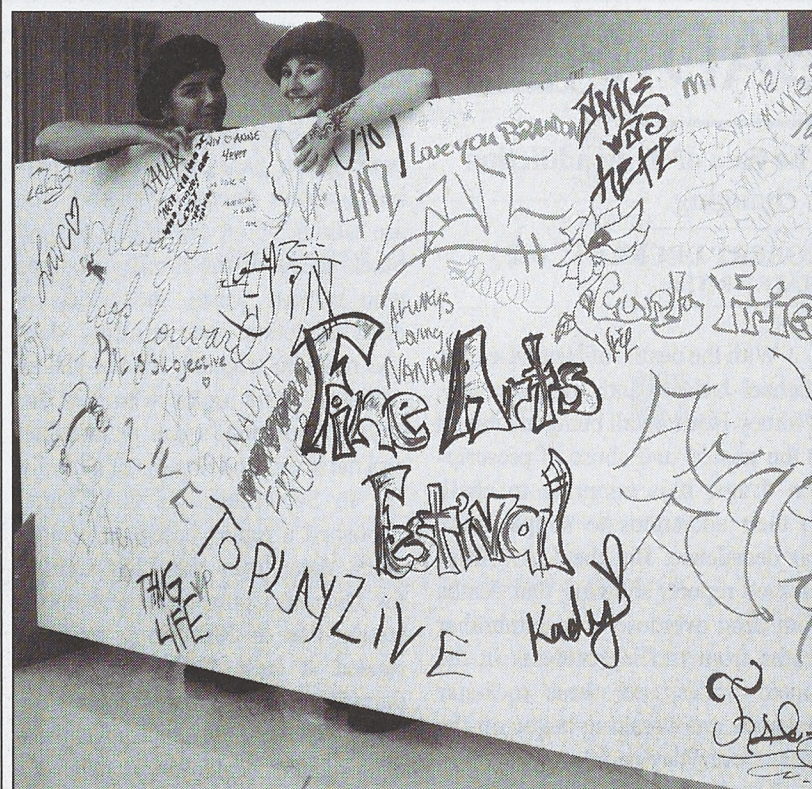
"We try to tie in ecology into whatever the theme of the day is," said Emelie Traub, the ECO Advocates club president. "We are reusing our bottles to do something really creative."

In addition to the different clubs that came out to show their support for the arts, Valley's Financial Aid office held its financial aid awareness day.

The Financial Aid office had all its representatives and counselors available for anyone who had questions about financial aid. Students benefited from both a cultural experience through the arts festival and received counseling about obtaining money for school. Valley students were given the opportunity to speak with representatives without having to make an appointment to speak with a financial aid counselor.

"I think this is a great way for students who are shy about asking questions to ask questions," said Andrew Nguyen, a student worker in the Financial Aid office. "It's an inviting way so students don't feel they have to go into an office and sit down with a counselor."

The next club day will be Wednesday, April 25 in Monarch Square from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Along with club day, another financial aid awareness day will be held in Monarch Hall.



TAKING IT IN - The president of the arts club, Anne Tufenkjian, and the Associated Student Union fine arts commissioner, Ashley Miller, take a moment during the arts festival.

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VALLEY COLLEGE DANCE CONCERT FLOWS INTO PLACE

Dancers, choreographers and local talents work on the dance department's newest production.

EDYTHE SMITH
STAFF WRITER

In an attempt to express the complexity of movement and the many forces that affect life, the Valley College dance department prepares for its 2012 spring dance concert, "Ebb and Flow," which premieres May 11 at the Mainstage Theater.

Auditions for the concert were held in February during the first week of class, and student choreographer auditions were held in January. According to Carla Lubow, an adjunct dance instructor, guest and student choreographers will be showcasing new work alongside live percussion and drums. The theme of the production can be taken literally, physically or visually, and will serve as the foundation of each dance.

"'Ebb and Flow' is truly a theme that can apply to so many aspects of life," said Lubow, "[such as] surging forth, rise and fall, balanced and imbalanced, intensity and laid back, moving forward with control and/or allowing life to take its course."

The lighting design for the stage will be done by Kuo Lung Kai, a local professional who has worked on several productions at Valley and in the community. The concert will also feature live percussion from Nathaniel Meek, a local musician and actor who interviewed with Lubow for the project.

Several key dancers and choreographers have been involved in all of Valley's dance productions for many years, including Noelle Andressen-Kale—the president of

Valley's dance club. She has been dancing at Valley since 2007 and will be working with her mentor Kiha Lee in the spring concert.

For Andressen-Kale, one of the major obstacles in preparing for a performance is avoiding injury and staying healthy. Routines have been difficult in the past due to her battle with cancer, yet she fulfills high expectations and appreciates the understanding of her professors.

"I love growing, developing and pushing myself," said Andressen-Kale. "I don't want them to go easy on me. I like to dance hard athletically and use the physical technique they taught me, especially in the concerts."

Monica Fleming, a CSUN graduate in Pan-African studies, returned to Valley in 2008 to revisit her love of dance and will be choreographing this season. Fleming has performed in every spring concert since her arrival and teaches dance to local elementary students.

"My inspiration for my piece came from a duet that a friend and I, Anna Carlise Borland, worked on in fall 2011," said Fleming. "We have always wanted to work on something together, so I wanted to create a dance that highlighted our strong areas and how different our styles were."

Although budget cuts have held a negative effect on many productions, Andressen-Kale noted that the dance club donates 15 percent of financial intake via fundraisers to the dance program and strives to look for other ways to make the performing arts at Valley self-sustaining. According to Lubow, dancers will provide all additional props and materials for their pieces and work as a team to help the concert come to fruition. "Ebb and Flow" opens May 11 at 8 p.m. Visit lavc.edu/dance/index.html for more information.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MAGGIE HASBUN | VALLEY STAR

VALLEY'S DENIM DAY RAISES SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS

April 25 marks this year's Denim Day as a part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

ARIEL WAITKUWEIT
COPY EDITOR

Capitalizing on the popularity of jeans, Valley College's Healthy Advocacy Response Team will collaborate with various clubs Denim Day, April 25, to help debunk rape fallacies in observance of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

According to Student Health Center Physician Assistant and HART member Sonia Nodal, "The dance club will perform a piece reflecting emotions of victims of sexual violence and the positive outcomes of seeking help right away."

By creating such a performance and handing out educational information and resources, HART and the dance club intend to contribute to Denim Day's cause.

Denim Day began nearly 15 years ago after an Italian Supreme Court chief judge overturned and dismissed the 1998 case of an 18-year-old driving student against her 45-year-old instructor when he appealed the original verdict convicting him of rape.

According to Peace Over Violence—the organization sponsoring "Denim Day in LA and USA"—the chief judge ruling on the case said, "Because the victim wore very, very tight jeans, she had to help him remove them, and by removing the jeans, it was no longer rape but consensual sex."

The new verdict upset much of Italy, especially since—according to a 1999 New York Times article—the country had, in 1996, increased its sexual assault punishment from a moral offense to a criminal felony. Female Italian Parliament members were so outraged by the overturn that, according to POV, they wore jeans to work in protest. Following suit, the California Senate and Assembly, as well as POV's Executive Director Patricia Giggans, sparked the protest in Los Angeles.

Denim Day encourages the public to wear jeans to educate society about the injustices and seriousness of rape. POV's campaign works to refute excuses, invalid reasoning and ill-applied euphemisms regarding rape—such as the misconception

that certain clothing women wear encourage acts of impulse thereby taking away from rape's severity.

"Because of [Denim Day], we are more conscious about that crime," said sociology major So Young Park. "As we remember that crime, we can better protect women from these [kinds of] crimes."

On campus, HART works with various programs to do just that: educate and protect people against sexual assault, rape and stalking. In addition, Valley offers support for students who have been raped.

"The first thing they need to do is contact our sheriffs," said Nodal.

According to HART's "Break the Silence, Stop the Violence" brochure, Valley's Sheriff's Station must, by law, take official reports of sexual assault cases. After contacting authorities, students can turn to HART and other community programs for emotional support.

"We give them resources as far as being able to get them help regarding their needs... getting them counseling or help to try to get their lives back together again," said Nodal.

For more information regarding sexual violence, pick up a HART brochure in the Student Health Center or visit lavc.edu/sexual-assaultpolicy. Denim Day will take place in Monarch Square club day, April 25, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

BIG STARS MOVING TO THE SMALL SCREEN BRING WITH THEM CREDIBILITY, RATINGS

TV was once a place known to discover Hollywood talent, but it is now a stop for award-winning actors.

COURTNEY BASSLER
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

There's a new trend with Hollywood actors, writers, directors and producers: instead of the target audiences in stadium-style seating in front of theater screens, they are now on couches in front of the TV.

With more movies transitioning into the blockbuster genre and onto IMAX screens, it is no surprise that TV series are seeing expanding budgets and attracting more credible actors, directors, writers and producers.

"Actors follow wherever the writers go," said Gerry Koch, a talent agent from The Gage Group in Sherman Oaks.

Take Tina Fey, a screenwriter for the late-night variety show, "Saturday Night Live," and Alec Baldwin, a 16-time "SNL" host who was known for his roles in movies such as "The Departed" and "The Hunt for Red October." Baldwin was never seen as someone who would take a TV role. However, because of Fey's work and Lorne Michaels' track record, Baldwin signed on for "30 Rock," written by Fey. In her book "Bossypants," Fey recalls how she approached Baldwin to star on "30 Rock."

"The show was good that week, and Alec was having a good time," Fey wrote. "Lorne and I looked at each other—should we just ask him? Lorne asked him, and Alec said yes."

Many respected actors, such as Oscar winner Anjelica Houston—who is now starring in the Steven Spielberg-produced NBC musical series, "Smash"—are now appearing on TV.

Seven-time Academy Award-nominated director Martin Scorsese produces and directs HBO's "Boardwalk Empire," which won a Director's Guild of America award in 2011. The series also won the 2011 best drama series Golden Globe. "Boardwalk Empire" also helped its star, Steve Buscemi, win his first Globe.

In addition, director and pro-

ducer Judd Apatow—known for his work in "Knocked Up," "40-Year-Old Virgin" and "Superbad"—is now producing HBO's "Girls," which premiered Sunday.

Joining Tinseltown residents on the small screen are Broadway actors such as Megan Hilty of "Wicked" and Tony Award-winner Sutton Foster. Hilty stars on "Smash" while Foster will star on ABC Family's "Bunheads," premiering June 11.

It is no surprise that actors are now calling TV studios home. Many are on their way to an "EGOT"—the coveted title earned after winning an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony. In the end, the winners are the audience members at home who get to see great art without having to pay admission.

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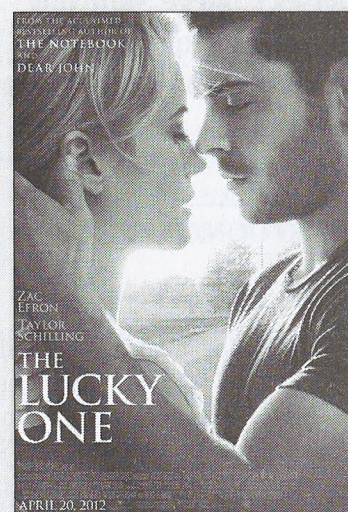
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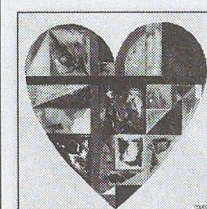


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- TWO GENTLEMEN FROM CHICAGO: APRIL 18, FALCON THEATRE
- GOYTE: APRIL 19, NOKIA THEATRE
- A BOY AND HIS DOG: APRIL 19, EGYPTIAN THEATRE
- LOS ANGELES COMEDY FESTIVAL: APRIL 20, THE ACTOR'S COMPANY
- BETTYE LAVETTE: APRIL 21, UCLA ROYCE HALL

MONARCH BASEBALL COLLECTS WIN AGAINST WEST L.A. COLLEGE

The Monarch baseball team defeated West Los Angeles College Saturday 11-8. The victory gave the team its second consecutive victory.

ROMEO GONZALEZ
STAFF WRITER

The Valley College baseball team won a second consecutive game, defeating West Los Angeles College Saturday 11-8. This gave the Monarch team its 10th conference win of the season.

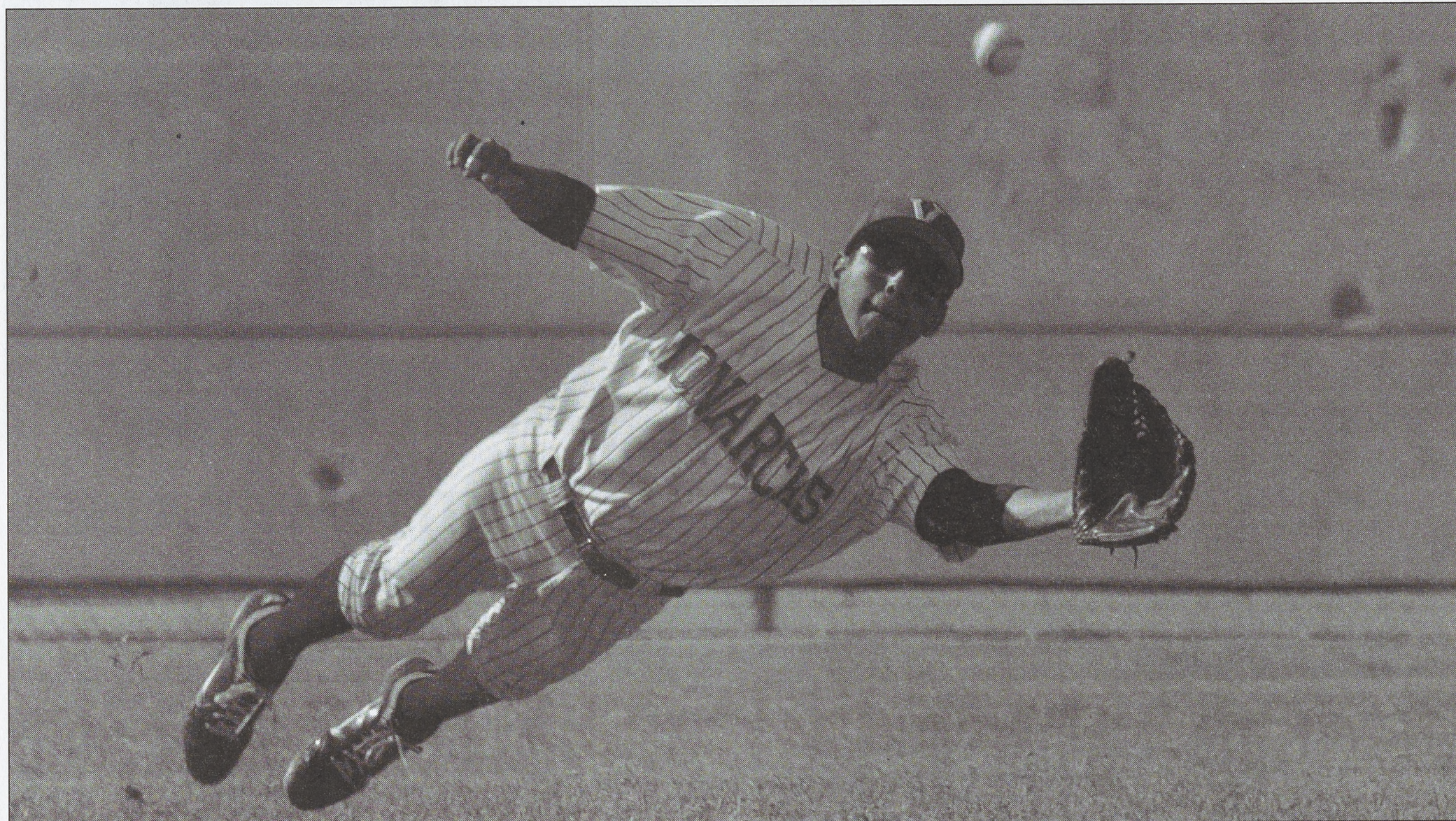
The Monarchs capitalized in the bottom of the first inning after Wildcats pitcher Jose Terrero walked two Valley players, loading the bases for Nathan Mendez, Valley's designated hitter. Mendez hit a fly ball to left field, bringing in three runs for the Monarchs to start the game.

"I was trying to cash in some runs," said Mendez. "I try to get base hits and get some RBIs to bring in the runners."

Later in the inning, Monarchs right fielder Marcel Chavez hit another fly ball—this time to right field—bringing Mendez in to score a run. Valley ended the inning with a five-run lead over West L.A.

The Monarch momentum continued through the second inning.

Valley's second baseman Casey Ryan stole second and third base, putting himself in scoring position. Trevor McMaster hit a fly ball to right field, bringing



LEAP OF FAITH - Valley College infielder Marcel Chavez leaped to catch a pop-fly hit by West L.A. The Monarchs led by as much as 7 runs during Saturday's game and went on to defeat the Wildcats 11-8 at home.

in the run by Ryan and giving Valley a 6-0 lead.

West L.A. rallied together at the top of third inning, bringing in some runs of their own. Wildcats lead off hitter Rodney Bradley hit a ground ball to right field for a single. Monarch pitcher Trevor Rapp walked the next Wildcats batter, leaving to opponents on base. The Wildcat's Indelacio Rodriguez brought in

two runs with a line drive to left field. West L.A. plated three runs in the inning, making the score 6-3.

"We got to do a better job of throwing strikes," said Valley coach Dave Mallas. "We gave up 12 walks today."

Although West L.A. cut the Monarchs lead in half early in the game, Valley did not lose focus and continued its great offen-

sive performance. In the bottom of the fourth, the Monarchs scored two more runs on a line drive to left field by third baseman Eric Folkers. In the bottom of the fifth, Valley added three more runs after stolen bases by Brice Kelly and Cameron Doran and a long ground ball by Sam Johnson, making the score 11-4.

West L.A. lacked rhythm throughout the sixth and seventh

innings and could not find a way to get back into the game. It was not until the top of the eighth that the Wildcats capitalized on two of Valley's pitching mistakes, loading the bases and scoring three runs—which brought the Wildcats within three.

The Wildcats had one more opportunity in the ninth inning to either tie or win the game. Monarchs closer Braxton

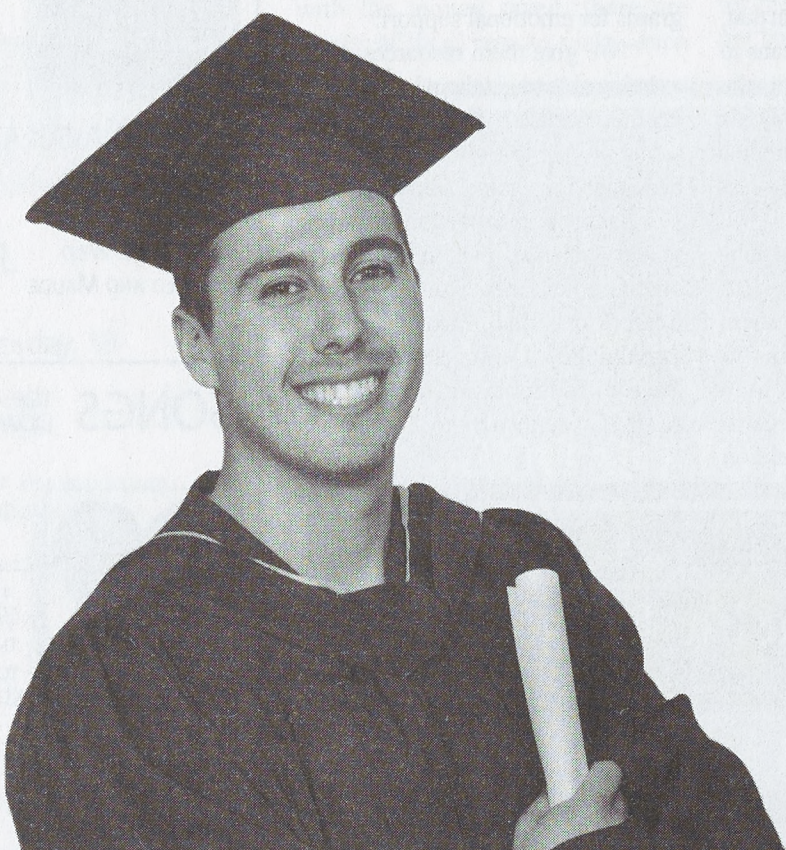
Ravello-Diaz came into the game for Aaron Rosenberg and collected the three outs the team needed, ending the game and giving the victory to Valley.

"I stay mentally prepared for that amount of pressure to end the game," said Diaz. "If I'm not ready to go in the game, there is no way I can close that out."

The Monarchs' next home game will be this Saturday,



SAVED - Infielder Eric Folkers slides to get back to first base from leading off. The Monarchs beat West L.A. 11-8 on Saturday at home.



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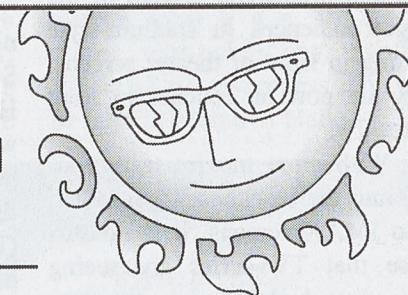
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FRESHMAN PITCHER NAMED SOCAL PLAYER OF THE WEEK

Valley College freshman Travis Cassidy pitched a complete game against Bakersfield, earning him SoCal player of the week.

ROMEO GONZALEZ
STAFF WRITER

Sporting sunglasses and standing at a towering 6 foot 2 inches, 20-year-old Monarch pitcher Travis Cassidy has been a great attribution to Valley College's baseball team this season.

"So far this season, nothing fazes Travis," said coach Dave Mallas. "It doesn't matter how big or how small the game is. He maintains his composure the entire time."

Cassidy was named SoCal

player of the week during the first week of April. Valley played against Bakersfield College where he pitched a complete game, throwing 81 pitches and giving up only one run.

Cassidy comes from a family of baseball players. His uncle, Bob Adams, is part of the UCLA baseball hall of fame and holds the record for most hits with a wooden bat. Troy and Thomas Cassidy, his two older brothers, won baseball city and national championships for Chatsworth High School.

Cassidy is a product of Calabasas High School in the San Fernando Valley. He started playing baseball at age 4 and started pitching in the Little League when he was 8.

In high school, Cassidy was a four-year varsity player. As a freshman, he came into games as a relief pitcher and began as a starter

his sophomore year. He was named pitcher of the year for Calabasas his sophomore and junior years.

"I have been playing baseball since I was 4 years old and pitching since I was 8," said Cassidy. "I don't regret one day of it."

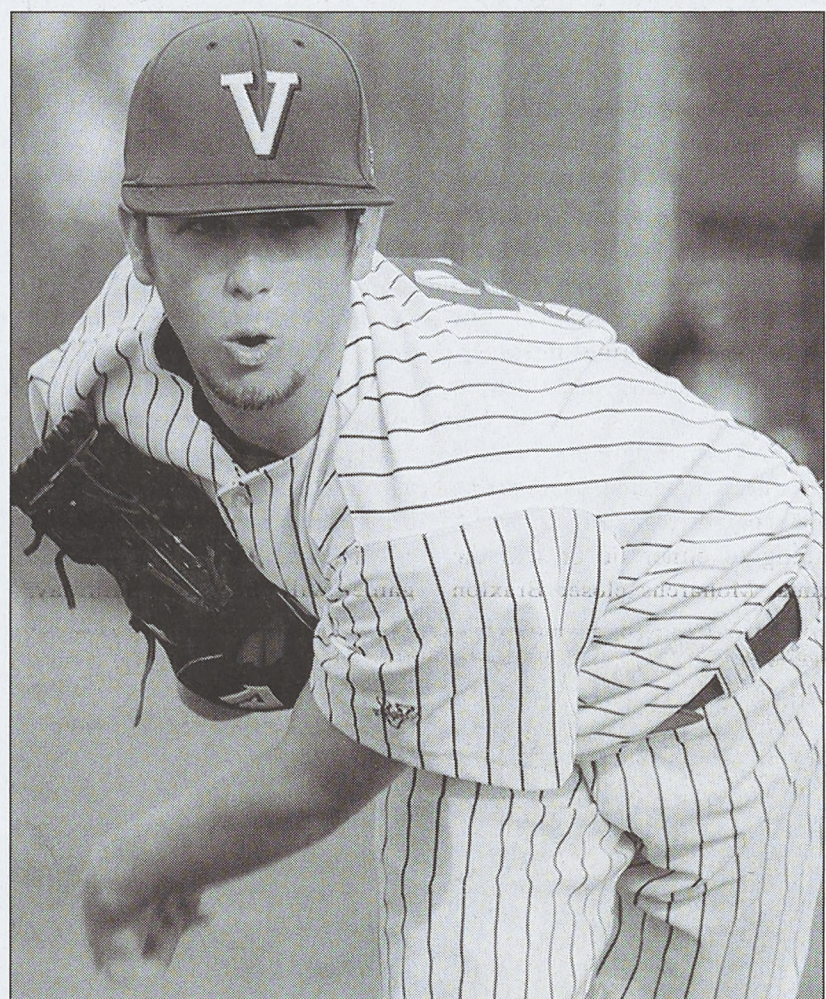
Cassidy is a freshman at Valley and was recruited by Mallas. According to Cassidy, he chose to bring his talent to the Monarchs because it was the best baseball program for him. He stated the pitching coach at Valley, like himself, is left-handed and believes he can really help him develop as a player.

Aside from the coaches at Valley, Cassidy looks to his older brother Thomas, who is a former Monarch, for advice on his games. According to Thomas, he and his younger brother talk baseball on a daily basis. On weekends, they commute to the bullpen at Harvard Westlake High School where Thomas is coach. There, Thomas explained, the two of them talk about certain situations Cassidy might encounter during a game and how he could handle them.

"I think he's been around the game for so long. And watching Troy and I play, he knows to handle himself pretty well," said Thomas. "He's exceeded our expectations this year for a freshman."

Cassidy will return next year for another season as a Monarch. He hopes to get noticed by a local university because he wants to continue to pursue a career as a baseball player in Southern California, but he knows that baseball can take him anywhere. Both his parents and brothers are behind him no matter what choices he decides to make.

"We would definitely like to see him pitch at the next level," said Cassidy's mother, Kathy Cassidy. "Whatever he decides to do, we are there for him. He has much support from his brothers as he does his parents."



ANTWONE MERCER, PHOTO EDITOR | VALLEY STAR
THROWIN' HEAT - Pitcher Travis Cassidy practiced pitching after a game last week.

NATIONAL COMBINE SERIES HELD AT MONARCH STADIUM

Prep Football America brought its evaluation camp to Monarch Stadium Sunday to test some of the top high school student-athletes in the country.

ANTWONE MERCER
PHOTO EDITOR

Two hundred student-athletes were carefully selected from 125 Southern California high schools and invited to attend Sunday afternoon's Prep Football America's National Combine Series at Monarch Stadium—whose host was Valley College's football coach, Jim Fenwick.

"We run drills on 200 kids to get an idea of where top high school student-athletes stand athletically," said Fenwick. "Then, we tally up all the records at the end of the combine and [Prep Football America] supplies that information to four-year colleges. Also, having this event here brings all these kids to our campus and makes them aware of our facility. And, hopefully we find our next star by being a part of such a great organization. It's a win-win situation and every little bit helps."

The combine involved an NFL-style training camp with four stations on the field—the pro-shuttle drill, three-cone drill, 40-yard dash and

broad jump—and another station in the weight room for the 185-pound bench-press drill. Although it was a day of athletic scrutiny, Prep Football America's academic message was loud and clear to the student-athletes and their parents.

"It's about football today, but don't forget about getting the job done in the classroom so you can go to a four-year college and get a degree," said Bill Harrison, one of the founders and a national scouting director for Prep Football America and co-founder of the Varsity Sports Group college recruiting network. "Though everyone here today won't make it to the pros, [more than] 90 percent of the student-athletes we work with go on to compete at inter-collegiate levels."

Assisting thousands of student-athletes each year, Prep Football America is in its ninth year performing athletic and academic evaluations, training camps, combines and personal recruiting services for student-athletes across the country. In addition to Harrison co-founding VSG—one of the nation's leading recruiting consulting companies—Brad Cotton and Bob Warsaw also contributed to its making. According to Harrison, the group makes it possible for kids to stay focused on what they love to do: play football. Prep Football America also helps coaches statewide get an early look at some of the nation's top high-school football

players and their sprint times and scores.

"When it comes to college recruiting, everybody assumes that these coaches know where these young talents are," said Warsaw. "However, in order to get recruited, you need a lot of college coaches to know about you; and just because they know about a potential recruit's 40-yard dash time [or other skill], doesn't always mean they know what school he attends. So, the challenge is to give these guys a goal to focus on and get their information out to these four-year colleges."

Although the main goal of this organization is to find the best players across the country and make their information available, Prep Football America advocates education and is looking to get every possible student into a four-year college by using football as a vehicle to pursue their education.

"This is the best combine I've been to so far, and I've been to like three," said Terin Solomon, a junior student-athlete at Moreno Valley High School. "It's a great way to test your skills against other elite students, and the combine prepares you for college and lets you know what you need to work on. It's [a] great way to keep kids out of trouble, and [it] gets them ready for a college program."

SEE GALLERY PAGE 8

ANALYZE THIS

BRYANT'S INJURY MAKES LAKERS RELEVANT AGAIN

Kobe Bryant's absence has given the Lakers the experience needed to become a play-off threat.

LUCAS THOMPSON

Less than a month ago, Kobe Bryant was slamming chairs on the sideline, and Andrew Bynum was launching three-pointers like he was Reggie Miller in the '90s.

They were both benched.

In an attempt to gain control of his team, Lakers coach Mike Brown sidelined two of the team's biggest superstars. Bryant, amongst other things, was benched for laziness on defense against the Memphis Grizzlies; and Bynum, who has shot a deplorable 12.5 percent from behind the arc in his career, was seated for taking two ill-advised three-pointers late in the fourth quarter against the Golden State Warriors.

Although Brown made bold and warranted moves, they were too little too late—and both revealed the lack of respect the team held for its newly appointed head coach.

"I guess 'don't take threes' is the message," Bynum said in an interview with the Washington Post about Brown benching him. "But I'm going to take some more. I just hope it's not the same result. I hope that I make it."

This Lakers team inevitably misses "Zen Master" Phil Jackson. Jackson retired with an unprecedented .704 winning percentage. He posted 19 play-off berths, 13 Finals appearances and a record 11 NBA titles in his 19-year coaching career. Brown's career highlights coming into Los Angeles consisted of taking the Cleveland Cavaliers to the Finals in 2007, earning coach of the year in 2009 and dealing with LeBron James for five years.

"He's a bright young mind in this game," one NBA coach told ESPN's Stephen A. Smith shortly after Brown was announced as the Lakers' replacement for Jackson. "You can't help but be happy for him because he paid his dues and he's such a nice guy. But that last part—the one about being such a nice guy—is the kind of thing that hurts you in this league."

The Lakers needed something to forge respect and cohesiveness. It needed to battle through adversity, together, with the help of Mike Brown.

And so came the opportunity.

Kobe Bryant has missed the past five games due to an injured shin, and this has been the absolute best thing that could have happened to the Lakers organization so close to playoffs. It has allowed their superstar to rest while forcing the others to step up, play together and find out who they are without the "Black Mamba."

Prior, the team was a disorganized, inconsistent group that defined its performance each night by Bryant and his shooting percentage.

Since then, the Kobe-less team has gone 4-1 against some of the best teams in the league—including the Denver Nuggets, San Antonio Spurs and Dallas Mavericks. Consistent clutch performances from Metta World Peace, Ramon Sessions and Matt Barnes combined with the astounding rebounding and field-goal percentage improvement of Bynum and Pau Gasol has given a new face to a Lakers team that was highly discounted as a championship contender.

Nobody doubts them now.

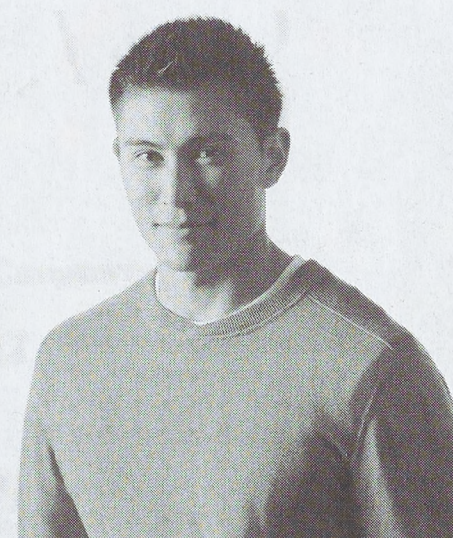
Brown proved he could make adjustments in the absence of his leading scorer. The bench and complementary players showed they could be successful without their team leader on the court. And, most importantly, the squad has endured and conquered adversity heading into playoffs, as a team ... with coach Brown.

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NATIONAL COMBINE SERIES HELD AT MONARCH STADIUM



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COURTNEY BASSLER
PHOTO AND VALLEY LIFE EDITORS

Monarch Stadium was home to 200 elite high school student-athletes from 125 Southern California schools on Sunday's Prep Football America's National Combine Series, whose host was Valley College coach Jim Fenwick.

The combine was an NFL-style training camp, which consisted of four stations on the football field. More than 20 coaches volunteered

their time and evaluated the players' speed, agility and strength, as well as measured their jumps.

"We run drills on 200 kids to get an idea of where top high school student-athletes stand athletically," said Fenwick. "Then, we tally up all the records. Having this event here brings all these kids to our campus. Hopefully, we find our next star by being a part of such a great organization. It's a win-win situation, and every little bit helps."

